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AN ADDRESS

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES,

ON THE

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

BY JESSE BENTON.

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FOR THE AUTHOR.

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TO THE CITIZENS

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

AS a citizen of Tennessee; and a candidate for Elector of President and Vice-President of the United States in one of the Electoral Districts of this state, the undersigned has heretofore assigned thro' the medium of the newspapers, some of the reasons which have induced his determination to support Mr. CRAWFORD. As a citizen of this great Republic, and possessing the rights and privileges common to every member thereof, he now avails himself of the opportunity afforded by the Press, to furnish to those concerned, some of the reasons which in his opinion ought to operate against the selection of other candidates. In undertaking this investigation, which, with regard to at least one of the aspirants of his own state, he conceives an imperious duty to himself and his country, he is well aware that he will undergo the censures and upbraiding of sycophants and partisans, many of whom entertain in reality the same opinions with himself, but make different professions; that he will be termed violent and abusive, when he is merely referring to acts of violence and abuse in others; and that he will be denounced by demagogues, as seeking to gratify personal hostility, when he only expresses what they know and feel, but have not courage to pronounce.

Fellow-Citizens: The office of President of these United States, is one of too much importance to be given to any one who chooses to aspire to it, aided by flattery and intrigue, or to rush into its honours

and responsibilities through the blaze of military fame and popular ferment. It is an office which should be bestowed as the result of calm, deliberate judgment, not of intemperate zeal and heedless passion. Let us then inquire into the pretensions of some of those who are held up to our view as candidates for the station.

Mr. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, son of a former President, is named among the candidates for that important office. Education forms the habits of men, which govern their conduct through life. John Adams, the father of him who is now a candidate, has avowed the dangerous doctrine, "that family distinctions would arise and prevail among us." John Quincy, the son; a very few years back, published at Washington a famous letter on etiquette, in servile imitation of European style and royal pageantry. Such principles and such practice will not serve republicans. Our country was brought to the brink of ruin by the high-handed measures of the father when in power: the hasty development of his ambitious views saved us: the country took the alarm; Jefferson, the friend of liberty, was placed at the helm; the standing army, alien and sedition laws, heavy taxes, and public debt, vanished, and the nation once again flourished. Adams the elder was hurled from power by the indignant voice of the people; but the love of power, and the notions of hereditary grandeur, still remained. His son John Q. Adams was sent to Europe, and bred among princes and nobles, where democracy is a crime, and where deceit, hypocrisy and falsehood are taught as part of the science of government.

With his foreign education the son returned among us. Rash in the onset, he commenced hostilities against the men and measures which had just saved the country from ruin. Finding himself on the weak side, he deserted to the strong one, and continues to this day a doubtful and suspicious member of the re-

publican family, ready to desert again when aught can be gained by it. The honest part of the federalists charge Mr. Adams with his apostacy as a crime; the intelligent of the republicans consider him as a deserter from the enemy's ranks, and not to be trusted in command with them. Jefferson and Madison, out of regard for the services of his forefathers in early times, and in consideration of his diplomatic skill, employed him in foreign service; but they trusted him not with the keys of the citadel; they did place him as one in the midst of them. Under the administration of Mr. Monroe, he has been received into the cabinet, and placed as one among the advisers of a republican administration. How this was effected, is yet mysterious to many, although others account for it in a manner satisfactory to themselves. It seems to have been the design of Mr. Monroe, in forming his administration, to please all parties, and to introduce in some small degree the system of amalgamation, about which we have recently heard so much. The selection of Mr. Adams as Secretary of State, was approaching as near the Federal ranks as could be risked with the existing feeling among the great body of republicans. Another consideration which is alleged to have operated in favour of his selection, was, that Mr. Crawford was viewed as the republican candidate for the presidential chair at the close of Mr. Monroe's service; and inasmuch as the office of Secretary of State had hitherto been viewed as a stepping-stone to the presidential chair, and Mr. Crawford had selected a different department, it was deemed advisable to bestow the most prominent office on one who from his dubious politics and recent apostacy from the federal ranks, was considered least likely to attract public attention as a candidate for president. Whether the latter reason be more correct than that the appointment of Mr. Adams was with a view to ensure federal support to the adminis-

tration, must remain a matter partly of conjecture and inference from existing facts.

But although others might not have designed Mr. Adams as a candidate for the presidency, it was soon discovered that for himself he had far other views. By virtue of his office of Secretary of State, he had the appointment of eighty-one printers of the laws of the United States, with a patronage to each of from 3 to \$500 per annum. It has been lately ascertained, that there are about six hundred printing presses in the United States. Let it then be considered, that in each state and territory, Mr. Adams had the disposition of the public printing to three separate presses, and that in addition to the presses actually subsidized by the appointment itself, an equal, perhaps a greater number would be looking forward to the receiving of a similar favor ; we thus find one third of all the presses in the United States under the control of a single individual, and those too of the most influential character. It is not by any means strange, that with such a force at his back, such a host of long-winded trumpeters to sound his praise abroad, Mr. Adams should set up for himself, and endeavour in good earnest to have the stains of federalism and apostacy obliterated from his political life, and himself held up as a pure and immaculate republican. And in fact, full well have these subsidized presses, or at least the most of them, complied with the implied conditions of the favours bestowed on them. Mr. Crawford was known to hold the foremost rank with the great republican family, and was looked to by them as the successor to Mr. Monroe. Hence it became obvious to Mr. Adams and his satellites, that until he was destroyed, no hope of success could be entertained for him. Immediately his hired assassins of fame and honor begin their projected work. The name of Crawford is assailed in every form and manner ; and from Maine to Georgia, yea, to the re-

mote wilds of the west, the most absurd fictions and perverted facts are detailed to his prejudice and degradation. Not content with defaming the character of a rival abroad, and disseminating the most ridiculous absurdities throughout the country with regard to his character and conduct in public and private life, an effort is made to withdraw from him the executive favour, and to create distrust and suspicion in the mind of the honest but unsuspecting President. In addition to his host of presses, Mr. Adams had his emissaries dispersed throughout the union in officers of his appointment, and friends created through their agency. The character of General Jackson was well known to Mr. Adams, and he was well aware that to approach him with success, flattery was the certain road. The high-handed measures of the General in Florida, and his Seminole campaign, afforded to Mr. Adams an opportunity for the display of all his skill in defending acts which were not defensible, and of making the General his fast and boisterous friend. The train was laid and took effect, and we thenceforth heard the praises of Mr. Adams sounded throughout the military camp, in the south and west. His apostacy was forgotten; his federalism denied; and his competitor, Mr. Crawford, abused and villified in every manner of which human ingenuity was capable. Thus did Mr. Adams make use of the violence of the General and his popularity among his partisans and dependants, to spread his fame and destroy that of his rival. But now another scene is opened to the view. The time of service of Colonel Williams, a distinguished Senator from Tennessee, was about to expire: he was known not to be one of the idolaters of Jackson, nor admirers of Adams: he was suspected of the sin of preferring Mr. Crawford: he was of course very obnoxious to them and their friends. A wicked and designing man, who had once been one of Jackson's

greatest foes, and who had very recently been heard to denounce him as a tyrant, now started a new and daring course. His object was to remove Colonel Williams from the Senate of the United States, and obtain the place for himself.

For some time he managed secretly ; travelled through the state from the extreme east, to the extreme west ; consulted with the friends of Jackson, and bargained for the price of his iniquity. The legislature met : This man, who was a member, rose in his place, and gravely proposed to make Andrew Jackson President of the United States. At the close of an harangue prepared for the occasion, he exclaimed, with a loud voice, " If this terraqueous globe were in flames, and human agency could avail, who would the people of Tennessee call upon to extinguish them but Andrew Jackson ? " Here was war upon Heaven ; the great Jehovah and his attributes impiously seized and thrown at Jackson's feet. The train was laid ; the General's friends immediately joined in the cry of making him President. Thus was a man whom Adams had for years worked upon, and whom he considered as his most efficient weapon in the south, suddenly converted into a rival candidate. The ingenuity of John Quincy Adams turned even this accident to his advantage ; for, wherever the opposition to himself was too powerful for competition, there he caused his friends to urge the claims of Jackson, for by this he would at least divide the republican strength, and increase the prospects of his own success. And even should Jackson be elected, he felt confident that he could in reality be the President behind the curtain, his skill in politics being essential to the other, who would be chiefly employed in the advancement of his immediate kinsmen and dependants, and the gratification of his private enmities. And thus have the friends of Adams, and his colleague in ambitious views, J. C. Calhoun, united to

impose upon the honest and unsuspecting yeomanry of Pennsylvania, a man who they knew incompetent, and who they hoped and believed could not succeed in being elected; but to draw off the great state of Pennsylvania from the republican candidate was to them a most important object. But the management of Mr. Adams has not been confined to his eighty-one presses, nor to his sagacity in converting the nomination of Jackson to his own advantage. He had yet another, and a new and desperate game to play. The very extensive transactions of Mr. Crawford with the western banks, at a period of unexampled difficulty in monied concerns, he thought could not fail to afford some ground for censure, and some unguarded point through which to assail the reputation of the Secretary of the Treasury. Ninian Edwards, father-in-law to Mr. Cook, from his general character, and his willingness to engage in such a job, was the person selected, and he was to be supported indirectly by all the weight of the allied conspirators. Calhoun, who was also hostile to Crawford, as a supporter of his ambitious hopes, joined in the league, and the degraded press, the Washington Republican, established by Mr. Calhoun, was made the vehicle of assailing with anonymous publications, the conduct and character of Mr. Crawford. The premature explosion of the plot and its author, in the House of Representatives, for a time defeated and paralyzed the efforts of the conspirators. Yet, notwithstanding their defeat, a hue and cry was kept up during the interval of congress, and Edwards is seen traversing the country as far as Tennessee, consulting, and collecting materials for another assault. In the meantime, General Jackson is offered the appointment of Minister to Mexico, it is presumed through the agency of Mr. Adams, in order to get him out of the way. He declined the offer; Edwards visits the General in Tennessee; returns to congress, where the General is now a

member. The appointment of Minister to Mexico is then bandied about for months by the several aspirants, Jackson, Calhoun, and Adams, each assuring his friend that he would procure it for him. For a time, Ohio is made to hope for it in favor of a distinguished citizen; then again western Pennsylvania is flattered in the name of her most distinguished son; while the faction of Calhoun is flattered in the person of Mr. Dallas. The Tennessee resolutions are pending in the legislature of Maryland, and it becomes important that the caucus system should be decried there: the most influential and distinguished member of the legislature of Maryland is next in turn flattered with the appointment of Minister by the confederated candidates. The republican candidate is strong in North-Carolina, and the confederates resolve to unite their forces under the fictitious name of "people's ticket," in order to defeat him. Here again a former Senator, who is supposed to possess great influence with the people, is flattered with the hope of an embassy, as the reward of his devotion to the cause of the allies, but in truth no such design was ever entertained by them with regard to him, or any one of those who have yet been named. Ninian Edwards was the man who bid the highest. He it was who became the assassin of reputation, the masked assailant of honest fame. He was to receive the appointment as a reward for his services in destroying Mr. Crawford, and his son-in-law, Mr. Cook, was to give the vote of Illinois to the allied candidates into the bargain. Yes, Mr. Cook, although aware that his state would most probably support Mr. Clay, has pledged himself, directly or indirectly, long since, that neither him nor Mr. Crawford shall receive it in the House of Representatives, should the election go there. Edwards is appointed Minister: he denies being the author of A. B. while his nomination is pending before the Senate, although he was then preparing for

the press an enlargement of the same publication. With considerable difficulty, and by the aid of the allied candidates, his nomination is confirmed; he sets off on his mission, and at the distance of three hundred miles, near the close of a protracted session, when congress was expected certainly to adjourn, when Mr. Crawford was extended on a bed of sickness, in a condition which should have excited sympathy from the most hardened wretch, he sends back to the House of Representatives a pamphlet of sixty pages, filled with the most invidious charges against the conduct and character of Mr. Crawford.

Scarce had this mass of corruption been one half heard, when a simultaneous burst of indignation was heard through the whole House, and scarce a voice could be raised in its defence. Even Cook, the son-in-law of Edwards, felt astounded by the manifest disapprobation of all parties, and the most profligate of Mr. Crawford's abusers were frowned into insignificance by the manly firmness of his supporters. To the extreme mortification of Mr. Crawford's accusers, a different course was adopted from what they had expected. They had supposed that congress, wearied with a tedious session, and disgusted with the details of this insidious pamphlet, would adjourn without acting upon its merits, and in the meantime the slanders it contained would go forth to the world, and have all the effect designed, before an inquiry could be had. But, on the contrary, an investigation was demanded by the friends of Mr. Crawford. An able and impartial committee was appointed, composed of a majority of members politically hostile to Mr. Crawford, and every one was ready to hear from them such a report as the merits of the case required. The accusers could not deny that justice would be done, but justice was to them a sad reverse. Edwards, the accuser, is brought back trembling, as a convicted culprit, into the presence of the committee;

is there examined; and cross-examined, and proven by the oaths of various persons to have stated those things which were not true. Mr. Crawford is triumphantly acquitted, and Edwards retires in disgrace from the office so iniquitously obtained. His coadjutors in vain attempt to shield him. The honest feelings of the President were insulted by the proposal: it was rejected with disdain. But, although the voice of the nation had proclaimed Ninian Edwards a *false accuser*, a debased and self-convicted slanderer, and honest men of all parties united in condemnation of his nefarious project, yet Mr. Adams and his coadjutors did not design that he should thus be suffered to sink in oblivion, nor that Mr. Crawford should enjoy the fruits of his victory, without another effort. In celebrating the fourth of July, the committee, composed of the most respectable men about Washington, on being advised by many men of high standing in society, that they could not associate with Ninian Edwards on terms of equality; that they could not consent to partake of a social dinner with one who was as a convicted felon: the committee, under these circumstances, and guided by their own sense of propriety, suggested, in the most delicate manner, to Mr. Edwards, that his company could not be considered acceptable at the proposed celebration.

No sooner had this been made known to Mr. Adams through the medium of his hired Journal, than it occurred to himself and his associates as a suitable opportunity for striking a blow at Mr. Crawford, and supporting yet a little while the fallen and degraded Edwards. A letter is written by Adams, Calhoun and M'Lean, (the latter of whom is the mere creature of Calhoun, indebted to him for his office, and subject to his control,) in which they say in substance, that in consequence of the rejection of Edwards, they will not partake of the dinner; and further they take occasion to say, that the charges of

Edwards against Crawford are yet pending before the nation. Base insinuation ! Miserable subterfuge of a defeated faction ! By this act alone, if other evidence was not attainable, it became notorious that the suspicions of John Randolph, and hundreds of other distinguished men, in and out of Congress, were but too well founded, " that the whole of the A. B. affair was a plot for the ruin of Crawford, and the aiders and abettors of Edwards were then in Washington at work behind the scene." But dangerous and disgusting as has been the conduct of Mr. Adams in this affair, it is yet less offensive to the pure principles of democracy, to the liberty of conscience and freedom of the press, than his recent attack upon the National Intelligencer, the leading republican print in the United States.

The National Intelligencer has possessed the confidence of the people, and has stood by the administration, through evil and through good report, during the period of twenty-four years ; during which time it has enjoyed the respect and confidence of a Jefferson, a Madison, and a Monroe. Temperate and impartial in the discharge of its public duties, and by no means violent in political feeling, it has presented less ground for offence, less cause for exception, than almost any political paper in the United States. But all this would not suffice with Mr. Adams. The editors of the Intelligencer, although they treated Mr. Adams with the most marked respect, were known to prefer Mr. Crawford for President. Not content with the allegiance of his eighty-one presses throughout the Union, by virtue of his appointment, together with the additional number of expectants, and other supporters, directed by various means, he aspired to the good will of the leading paper, and being disappointed in this, he determined on revenge. With that overbearing disposition which has shown conspicuous in the career of father and

son of the Adams dynasty, he sought for cause of quarrel with the *Intelligencer*, and on the most frivolous pretext, transferred to his own *hired Journal*, all the patronage within his gift. In the columns of this *Journal*, he is seen entering the lists as a disputant, speaking through the fictitious editor the sentiments of hostility he feels towards his formidable rival. In this *Journal* he can be traced on every page, entering the lists in his own behalf, under the flimsy disguise of the mere mechanical editor, Peter Force.

The course pursued by Mr. Adams towards the *National Intelligencer*, is too much like that of the tyrants of Europe, whose manners he has in some degree adopted, by too much familiarity with them. It is in vain that the people may look for truth or independence from the public presses, if they are to be controlled by a few individuals, or a single great man disposed to sacrifice every thing to his own ambition. But it is needless to speak further of the conduct and character of John Q. Adams. He has been always known as the political enemy of the west, and has on all occasions sought to advance the interest of the north, at the expense of the south and west. His opposition to the purchase of Louisiana; his disposition to yield up some of the most invaluable privileges to the British in relation to the navigation of the Mississippi; and the insidious part he performed behind the scene during the pending of the Missouri question, all go to manifest his total disregard for the interests of the west, and his jealousy of our growing population.

I have already stated the manner and the means by which General JACKSON was brought before the public as a candidate for the Presidency. After his annunciation as a candidate for President, through the interference of his pretended friends, the affair which was designed merely as a compliment to the General, or a scheme to affect the senatorial election, was turned

into an earnest effort in favor of his pretensions. A few dependants, as well as those who were seeking for some popular theme on which to ride into power themselves, took advantage of the good fortune which had attended his military operations, and urged his claims with the most unceasing efforts. The expected plunder of public offices, and his known partiality for his favourites, whetted their zeal, and increased their clamours. Meetings were called, and a number of the unreflecting and complying part of the people were induced to pledge their support. The support of Jackson became the watchword on all occasions, and none but those who would join the cry in his favour were to be considered worthy of public employment. The great mass of the people were unacquainted with the pretensions of rival candidates, and the greatest exertions have uniformly been made, either to keep them out of view, or to present their claims in the most odious shape. State pride was appealed to, and the services of Jackson recounted, enlarged, and dwelt upon, until every species of flattery and adulation was exhausted. The people were taken as by storm, and carried along with the torrent, until it began to be considered almost treason to resist the current.

Under this excitement of popular feeling, the Legislature of Tennessee met, and a Senator was to be elected in place of Colonel Williams, whose term of service had expired. It was soon discovered that Williams stood too high in the estimation of the public and of the legislature of Tennessee, to be supplanted by an ordinary rival. After mustering all the charges which could be brought against him, (the whole amount of which was that he did not worship Jackson,) and combining all the forces of the opposite factions, it was clearly foreseen that a large majority were in favor of Williams, against all and every opponent. The faction became desperate; and as a last

resort determined that Jackson himself should come upon the field. The plan was organized, and Jackson was announced as if without his knowledge or consent; when in fact it was predetermined for months before, that Williams should be beat at all hazards. At the bare mention of the plan, a majority of the members were struck with astonishment and disgust. To bring up Jackson at that late hour, when every other opponent had been driven from the field, seemed so unfair, so much like the gratification of personal hostility, that the honest indignation of impartial men was excited, and many who were friends of Jackson could not think he would consent to the scheme. Another objection which presented itself to all who regarded the rights of their fellow-citizens, was, that it had been the custom to allow the eastern section of the state a Senator, for the purpose of having the interests of each section fairly and fully represented.

It was discovered after the canvass of a few days amid extraordinary excitement, when every reason that could be advanced was urged in favor of Jackson; when members had been threatened, persuaded, and managed, in every way possible, that the friends of Williams yet held the majority, and that without further exertion he would yet prevail. In this state of things, a messenger was despatched for Jackson himself to appear on the ground, his presence being deemed indispensable. He came, and personally exerted himself to promote his election. Members were again appealed to in every shape in which they were accessible. It was urged that defeat would be ruinous to the prospects of Jackson for President, and that his presence as Senator would greatly advance his prospects. It was urged that the people were in his favour for Senator, as they had recommended him for President. Many members, by such arguments and representations, were induced to vote for him,

contrary to their own inclination and known will. And with the full benefit of all these circumstances. the vote, when taken, was, for Jackson 35, Williams 25.

Those who understood the true interests of Tennessee, then exclaimed against the appointment of Jackson as Senator in Congress. It was then clearly foreseen, and fully predicted, that he would be induced to *barter* southern interests for *northern votes*. The great northern measure of imposing prohibitory duties, so as to compel us to purchase of northern manufacturers at their own prices, was distinctly foreseen and exclaimed against before Jackson went from home. The bait, it was well understood, would surely be thrown out, and it was not doubted but he would *barter the interests of the south for his own promotion*. He felt secure at home, let him do as he would ; and for the votes of Pennsylvania, and the prospect of gaining Ohio, New-York and other tariff states, he misrepresented the interests and the wishes of his own constituents. But his appointment of Senator from Tennessee was a mere farce. He went not there to represent us ; he did not go to urge the claims of Tennessee, or prevent the enactment of laws injurious to her interests. No ; he went to electioneer for President, and he did so. We hear nothing of an armory in Tennessee : nothing of any other important measure being urged in behalf of our state. No : On the contrary, we hear of our Presidential candidate and his historian and dependant going hand in hand, in yielding up the rights of Tennessee, the interests of their constituents, for the purpose of buying presidential votes for Jackson. In the former representation from Tennessee, these northern manufacturers had found an insurmountable barrier to their views of gain at our expense. But now the scene was changed. Two Senators, and two complying representatives, are found from Tennessee, ready to yield up our interests at the shrine of ambition.

It was not denied by those who sent him there, that the object of his going into the Senate was to electioneer for President. We find him at Washington, bowing and cringing to all his former foes, save only his greatest rival, Mr. Crawford : to him he preserved a haughty distance, affecting to feel too much resentment at supposed injuries, to forgive him. He is seen with hosts of sycophants dancing attendance on his person, and flattering his vanity. He is placed at the head of the military committee, where his predecessor presided with so much skill and honor to himself and his state ; and by his friends he is expected at least there to make some figure : but, alas ! his speeches, if delivered, have never reached the public. He voted, that was all ; and even that by far too much, for he voted away the rights and the interests of his constituents. At the close of the session, when the memorial of Edwards was introduced into the house, and its supporters overwhelmed by the indignant feeling of a large majority of the members, the General looked wise, asked leave of absence, took the route homeward different from his usual course, spent a night on the road with Edwards, and in his return was not idle in causing to be circulated the most injurious insinuations against Mr. Crawford.

As a politician, General Jackson never could rise above mediocrity ; he is not deficient in ordinary capacity for ordinary transactions ; but his restless temper can never yield to the confinement and attention necessary to a man of general information. Boisterous in ordinary conversation, he makes up in oaths what he lacks in argument, and is in the habit of attempting to browbeat any opponent. Such have been the habits of the man in private life. He may for a time, and under peculiar circumstances, affect a different demeanor ; but it will be all affectation. The public career of Andrew Jackson is too notorious to require repetition. For all the good he has

done you, for all that has been done by the gallant men who fought and suffered under his command, he has received all the honor and all the profit. 'Tis true, he has essayed to *divide* with his *near relations* and *immediate dependants*; but to the great mass of the army, the gallant officers of various grades, who came not within the range of his peculiar favour, he has distributed but a small share of praise. Let us now for a moment revert to the early history of this man's life; not indeed the history published by a dependant biographer, who, as a reward for his writings, was placed in the Senate of the United States, and whose whole book is made up of the General's official reports, with the exception of one solitary truth relative to the Kentucky troops at Orleans, which was inserted contrary to the General's report, and does more justice to the men of Kentucky; but such a history as can be supported by the evidence of all impartial men to whom his whole course has been familiar, and who now view with astonishment his projected elevation.

In order to add to the military fame of Jackson, and attach veneration to his character, it is said by his friends that he partook of the toils of the revolution. I have never understood that he asserted this to be a fact, although I do not doubt that if old enough he would have taken a part in the contest, for he is truly a man of "blood and carnage;" yet I have no evidence that he did so, or that the statement by his friends is any thing else than an electioneering story. The first conspicuous acts of his life in Tennessee, may be found at the race-ground and cock-fight. At such places he was for many years, even up to the period of his joining the army, a leading and conspicuous actor. And it is a notorious fact, that he was scarce ever known to leave a race-ground without having participated in an affray or riot, or at least a quarrel. His whole life has been a

scene of confusion, and no man can point to a single day at which he has been at peace with the world, or during which he was not at open and violent enmity with some individual; nay, most of the time, with numerous individuals in public and in private life: not political differences, nor ordinary misunderstandings, but quarrels of the most violent, rancorous, and deadly nature. To recount the numerous rencounters, affrays, and personal controversies, in which he has been engaged, would be truly a tedious task. He has only fought one duel himself on fair and equal terms, and that was with Charles Dickinson. In this affair, after receiving the fire of his antagonist, and reserving his own, he took deliberate aim and shot his adversary through the body, a mortal wound. He has been the promoter of various duels, and has always evinced a disposition to see the practice encouraged. He was, so report says, a chief manager in a duel between two young gentlemen about sixteen years of age, their pistols near touching. Another of a desperate character between Mr. O. and Mr. D., and many others.

Tradition tells us, that some thirty years ago, he made an attack on an unarmed man named Roberts, himself literally loaded with arms. * * *

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At another time, he is said to have travelled two hundred miles to fight an old man, Governor Sevier; met him unarmed on the public highway, and compelled him to retire behind his company for protection. He has on all occasions discovered a disposition to bully his opponents, and is as willing to be considered dangerous, as to be expose himself to peril: yet I do not deny him all the courage, the savage ferocity his friends lay claim to. By his own confession, he delights to dwell on scenes of "blood and carnage." But without stopping to trace him through the turbulent course of his private life, and without recurring to those

transactions which it might be supposed would be brought into view on this occasion, and which would not fail to cast a crimson glow of shame on the face of his nearest friends, I will proceed to inquire into his public acts, from the period of his entering the service of the United States as a general of militia.

Soon after the declaration of war, a call was made on the state of Tennessee for two thousand of her volunteers, to march to the lower country, and there to act under the orders of General Wilkinson. General Jackson had the command of these troops as Brigadier-General, and proceeded with them to Natchez. At this place an order reached him from the War Department, requiring him to dismiss his troops. Although this order was no doubt expected to have reached him before that time, and no injury was designed to the troops, or advantage contemplated by the government from their situation, yet General Jackson manifested great violence on the occasion, inflamed the troops, with a view to render the government odious, and himself popular, and declared that the volunteers should not be compelled to enlist, for he would march them back to their homes. This was an occasion on which a true patriot would have explained the order, and done all in his power to render the soldiers satisfied with the government. Not so with the General: He determined to become popular with the army, suffer who would. On the return of the troops to Tennessee, they were discharged: the discharge was final: but on receiving intelligence, several months after the massacre at Fort Mimms, and waving all objections, these patriotic men again turned out to the number of two thousand or more, and marched under their former leaders, to the scene of action. In this campaign, General Jackson, as senior Major-General of militia, had command of all the troops from Tennessee. And in organizing the staff of this militia army, furnished the most conclu-

sive evidence of his disposition to advance his own relations and his particular adherents, without regard to qualification, or to the claims of others. His nephew-in-law, Stokely D. Hays, was appointed Quartermaster General. Another nephew-in-law, Coffee, was appointed by himself a General of cavalry, or mounted infantry, (a new proceeding in military operations.) Others of his kinsmen were placed around him, and the residue of his offices, or most of them, were filled by those who had aided, or certified in his behalf in relation to an affray in which he had been concerned previous to his joining the army. Thus, in the very outset of the campaign, did he manifest partiality, and disregard for qualification for offices, creating thereby a general feeling of disgust in the army. Some of those who had checked him in private life, took warning from the promotion of his certificate-makers and bullies, and kept out of the army in consequence.

Determined to reap all the honors of the campaign himself, and prevent the participation of the troops of East Tennessee in the applause which was expected to attend an easy conquest of half-armed savages, he eagerly rushed forward, regardless of consequences, and without making the necessary provision for the subsistence of his army. General Coffee, with one thousand of his mounted men, attacked and destroyed a village containing two hundred inhabitants, at Talashachee. In his official report of this action, the honor and praise is bestowed on his nephew, his self-appointed general of horse. The next affair was at Talladega, in which, according to his official report, "he received the most important assistance from the Quartermaster-General, Col. *Stokely D. Hays*," (another of his nephews-in-law.) Thus did he attempt to bolster up the reputation and advance the standing of his own kinsmen, at the expense of other officers of more merit and real talents. After this

battle, the army, on returning to camp, found itself destitute of provisions, no sufficient arrangements having been made to supply them. The winter was approaching; the volunteers, who had only expected to remain a short time, as their time would expire at any rate the 10th of December, had not provided themselves for a winter campaign, claimed their discharge, and wished to return home. Their application was treated with contempt, their officers insulted, and themselves denounced as deserters, cowards, and every abusive epithet applied to them.

Yes, fellow-citizens, two regiments of as gallant men as ever marched to a field of battle, composed chiefly of the first men in the country, or the sons of the most respectable families, some of whom have since filled the most dignified stations, and many of whom were men of equal, nay superior intelligence to Jackson himself; these men, in whose bosoms glowed as much true patriotism as in that of their commanding General, were termed traitors, deserters, cowards; were threatened with being shot, the militia planted on the hills to impede their march, and the body guard of the General called out with their pieces of artillery, and lighted matches, to hurl destruction through their ranks. Many of the gallant and intelligent young men composing this guard, shrunk with horror and disgust from the duty assigned them, and felt themselves imposed upon and degraded by the shameful display they were compelled to make.

Finally, the volunteers returned home, and Carroll, their Inspector General, possessing more popularity with the army and the people, than the General and all his kinsmen, was despatched to Tennessee for additional forces. He soon returned with eight hundred and fifty mounted men, chiefly heads of families, who had agreed to serve a tour of sixty days, choosing their own officers, and retaining to themselves the pri-

vilege of being commanded by no other than of their own choice, except himself, as their commander in chief. Notwithstanding this stipulation, it was so managed that his kinsman and general of horse, of his own creation, continued with the army as a General, and in the battles fought during the expedition, he was alleged to have contributed largely to the favourable result. In the last affair, the army was taken by surprise, and some confusion took place. The Nashville guard stood firm, and order was at length restored. Two of the volunteer colonels, who had brought themselves under Jackson's displeasure, by refusing to serve under Coffee, were arrested, and one of them sacrificed to the vanity and pride of the General, and his nephew Coffee. The other would have shared the same fate, but for the firmness of himself and friends. Another instance of the malignant cruelty of General Jackson was to be found in the case of the late General Roberts. This brave, upright and honest soldier knew no deceit, nor feared the face of man. He had toiled faithfully in the service of his country, and was among the most zealous and ardent of the officers of militia. His unbending spirit had caused offence to the General, and he sought the first opportunity afforded by a temporary indiscretion, proceeding alone from a want of sufficient knowledge of military rules, to have him arrested and tried, and would have most likely deprived him of command, had not the death of the old and faithful soldier disappointed the General of his victim.

Another call for militia was made; and the regiment of regulars commanded by colonel Williams, also came to his assistance. Of this regiment Thomas H. Benton, with whom the General had the encounter a short time previous, was Lieutenant-Colonel; and this of itself was sufficient with him to create distrust and malignity towards the whole regiment. Thomas H. Benton was forced to leave the

regiment; but owing to the remonstrances of the officers, he again joined them. The regiment was then marked for ruin; the officers who had recruited them were sent home, and the men transferred to an old regiment. The most of the officers were never allowed to see service again; while several hundred thousand dollars were given to keep Coffee in command. This was contrived by offering to receive mounted men just before a draft took place among the militia. As the latter were all classed, they knew when their tour would begin. For the sake of twenty or thirty dollars per month, and the convenience of riding, they volunteered freely, and were placed under Coffee. Thus was a force raised and officered without legal authority: the drafts were still made, as if no volunteers had turned out.

The 39th regiment, in the battle of the Horse-Shoe, lost as many men as the whole of the army besides; and in the ensuing summer, the climate of the lower country killed one fifth: yet the barbarous act of driving the officers home, and transferring the men, took place through the agency of Jackson.

I will remark here, that from the commencement of the Creek war to the battle of Orleans, Jackson was complained of by the officers for not allowing them to make official statements.

It was during the Creek war that the execution of John Wood, a young militiaman, took place, to the justification of which several pages of Jackson's, alias Eaton's book, is applied. It may have been conformable to the strict rules of military discipline, but it had a sickening effect at the time throughout the country. There were other executions which occurred under his military despotism, which are *suppressed* in the book. One of these scenes to which I allude, was the execution of six militiamen, under circumstances calculated to excite the utmost horror among a civilized and humane people. They composed a

part of the drafted militia who went out under the impression that they were to serve only three months. To satisfy all doubts in this respect, it is said they procured the opinion of a court-martial of their officers at home, and the private opinion of some of the officers, among whom, report states, there was one Brigadier-General of militia, previous to their marching for the army, all of whom concurred in the opinion that they were bound for only three months. At the expiration of this time, they returned home, were advertised as deserters, and, on being advised that they had done wrong, went back five hundred miles, willingly, and without being confined and forced back as criminals. Among these men was one preacher of the gospel, and one youth under twenty-one years of age, who had fought bravely during two tours previously. At least three of the six had families; two or three of them were charged with some other violation of the law, besides desertion. The soldiers who executed the sentence of the law, certainly aimed to miss the youth who had served the two tours before; only one struck him near the hip. They were all considered dead, and the soldiers who executed them had marched off. Some young officers happened, in indulging their curiosity by looking at the slain, to discover the young man open an eye. "Here is one of them winks his eye; he is not dead yet." "For God's sake dont shoot me again," said the young soldier, who had been pretending to be dead. The hour for their execution had passed and General Flouroy dared to spare his life. He died, though, in three or four days. These men were poor and friendless. Their distressed wives and their helpless children were left to sink under their load of misery—to mourn over their untimely, unnecessary, cruel and inhuman death. Their General was all-powerful; hence the tongue of reproach was silenced, and this scene of blood is sunk into oblivion, or remembered only to be

thought of, but not whispered to the prejudice of the would-be President. These men were put to death about the close of the war, and after, it is stated, the treaty with England.

A short time before the execution of these militia-men, seven regular soldiers were shot near Nashville by a band of regulars scarcely sufficient to guard the prisoners. They were confined in a house, and taken out and executed one at a time, there being scarcely enough men for the purpose of executing and guarding at the same moment. An eighth soldier was to have been executed at the same time. He was a young man, who had deserted one month before his time expired. General Jackson doomed him to die with the others. He was saved by writ of habeas corpus from Judge M'Nairy, who fell under Jackson's displeasure for snatching this one victim from his blood-stained hands. If Jackson's army had been at hand, no doubt M'Nairy would have shared the fate of Judge Hall and Judge Fromentin. Capital punishments in an army, are designed for example as well as for penalty; but in this case it was a transaction of horror to peaceful citizens: no army was there to witness the bloody tragedy. He has ever been a man of "blood and carnage."

General Jackson has always been charged with partiality to his own kinsmen and dependants among his Tennessee troops; but at the siege of New-Orleans he manifested his feelings of partiality on a much more extensive scale. This disposition was there transferred to the Kentuckians; and because a few men of that state, but half-armed and deserted by their fellow-soldiers, retired before an overwhelming force, he proclaimed to the world, "the Kentuckians ingloriously fled." The men of Kentucky, brave and rash to a fault, have been at all times among the foremost to obey their country's call. During this war, they had suffered much and bled free-

ly. Their bones are scattered from Orleans to the river Thames, in Canada. Kentucky is the home of most of my relations. Among the thousands of her brave sons, one of them, Captain Hart, nobly died on the bloody plains of Raizin.

After this vile slander on the state of Kentucky, how can General Jackson presume to ask for their support? How can he turn to the men of Georgia, to the freemen of North-Carolina, whom he has branded with the most abusive epithets "of old women, cowards, and effeminate creatures, unfit to appear among their fellow men," and yet ask them with confidence for their support? Yes, even the brave men of East Tennessee did not escape his abuse or his reproaches. But it is not in his nature to expect any thing else but submission and humble pliancy to his will.

General Jackson dictated the treaty with the Creek Indians, from his own showing. Among other articles, was one making a grant of land to himself and Hawkins, the other commissioner.

Previous to the Seminole campaign, and previous to the General's leaving Nashville, a friend of his, Captain John Gordon, and a nephew of Mrs. Jackson's, Captain John Donelson, were despatched to Pensacola, where they bought two hundred and twenty lots in town, and thirteen hundred acres of land one mile from it. Gordon told me, that they drew on Orleans for the money, and were authorized to draw for a very large amount more than they laid out. He refused to tell me who these purchases were made for. He further stated, that he went directly on from that place, and joined the General, who had by this time gone on. He stated that he had left Jackson in the Seminole country, but that he would return directly home, and send General Gaines by, to occupy Pensacola. It turned out, that Jackson had to come by himself and seize the place. John H. Eaton,

James Jackson, and others of the General's friends, are known to be concerned in this speculation.

At the Chickasaw treaty, General Jackson and Governor Shelby were the commissioners. Previous to the treaty, William B. Lewis, one of the General's men, came to Franklin and formed a partnership with Robert P. Currin, to secure a salt lick at the treaty, worth, it was supposed, thousands. The treaty was so managed, that Lewis got the lick. Mr. James Jackson got a body of land at Colbert's ferry, in the same manner, worth, the way land was then selling, at least half a million of dollars. The mode they practised, was, by making these reserves to the Indians, with the right to sell. The laws forbid such bargains; but the article giving the right to sell superseded the statute. These contracts were not binding until the treaty received the sanction of the President and Senate. After proper delays, the treaty was ratified. The news of the ratification of the treaty, and of these reserves, arrived at the town of Franklin during the sitting of the circuit court. Instantly two companies of knowing ones formed to buy the land. They found the lick was secured by the persons concerned. The Honorable James Trimble, Ephraim H. Foster, Charles G. Olmstead, and William Banks, Esquires, went off post haste, as agents for two companies, to purchase the land. After a journey of two hundred miles, day and night, in which some of them broke down on the road, they arrived in the nation. They called on Colbert. No words can express their astonishment, on finding that the day after the treaty was ratified in Washington city, though one thousand miles off, that the agent, Donnelly, had confirmed the lick and land contracts for Lewis, Jackson, and others. John Williams and John H. Eaton were the Senators. The treaty-making power is vested in the President and Senate, the

House of Representatives being considered too numerous to be trusted with business that requires great secrecy. Lewis and Senator Eaton are brothers-in-law ; according to their friend *Edwards, no secrets among relations*. There was something so base in this mode of cheating the government, that the parties concerned seemed to wish to hide their guilt by their ingenuity. They pretended that it was but a small affair ; that if government chose, it might, by paying their \$20,000 back, though they had paid it in goods, that they would give up the land. Some of us had informed the government of the trick, and the offer was seized. The party have been active in their hostility to Colonel Williams ever since.

When the public land was selling at Huntsville, General Jackson attended the sale, and took every step necessary to prevent people from bidding against him. He intrigued, and by the terror of his name, deterred people from bidding against him. He got four quarter sections at \$2 per acre. Report says that Governor Bibb would have given on the spot, \$30,000 for his bargain. When his first bid was made, some one in the crowd bid \$10. The crier could not hear this bid, which was not repeated.

Mr. Eaton is the man who wrote the book called "Life of Jackson." This is nothing more than Jackson's own life of himself. It is said to be, by the officers, full of falsehoods. It has fallen in the price here, from five dollars, to less than one. Eaton has gone to New York, 'tis said, to print a few thousand more of them. From every circumstance, this new edition is to have a political bearing.

After the Seminole campaign, congress attempted to inquire into his acts ; his raising and officering troops without authority ; his putting men to death illegally ; and his acts of war on a friendly power. The General attended, and threatened to cut off the

ears of members of both Houses. About the same time, he went to Murfreesborough, and bullied the Tennessee Legislature, telling them that if they did pass such laws, "that by God any twelve good and lawful men would find them guilty of perjury."

General Jackson's people talk much of his dignity and urbanity. Some five or six years ago, our Congressional candidates were addressing a large collection of people in Nashville. In the midst of Colonel Cannon's speech, General Jackson observed, "This is five damned infernal lies you have told, and I can prove you guilty of three." Cannon, in a calm and firm tone, replied, "I will not descend to your vulgarity of language, but what you say is unfounded ;" and then proceeded with as much dignity and calmness as if he had not been interrupted. The General endeavored to prove his assertions, but failed. He threatened chastisement ; but his situation became so awkward, that his friends got ashamed and backed out, and the General did the same.

I have now given enough of these disgusting details. General Jackson got Eaton to polish off his "Life of Jackson." It is in fact his own work ; he has now come forward to reap the fruits of his labour for years, in giving false impressions of himself. The veil must now come off ; he shall stand as he is before the people. If I colour too high, he has a host of active partisans to defend him ; public indignation would sink me ; and as I make these statements to his face, he can send the cure at the same time to the world. General Jackson is not to be shook by weak and malignant efforts of private enemies. Before his military fame added to his pride and strength, he would go all lengths to ruin those he hated. He has now arrayed for the prosecution of his ambitious schemes around him, all that is formidable in society. The pistol, the dagger, and the press, are at his com-

mand. The truth is, now, that the yoke and the chains are seriously presented to us ; we rise to support all that is sacred among freemen, a sound administration of our national affairs. The Republicans of the school of Jefferson are now rising in all their strength. We belong to the nation, but to no personal faction. We are for Crawford and Gallatin, only because they are wise and honest politicians; but we are willing to accept of Clay, of Macon, or any other sound men. Mr. Crawford has collected nearly two hundred millions of public money in seven years ; he has paid thirty millions of public debt; paid millions yearly to the revolutionary soldiers ; he has saved all the land purchasers from ruin ; he has taken all their paper money as if it had been gold and silver, and, by his superior talents, made it as good as specie to the government. Yet strange! the very people whom he relieved most about their land payments, are now his greatest enemies. This has all been the work of that master-spirit at intrigue, John Quincy Adams. He wrought on Jackson in the west to aid his views, and he started Calhoun in the south from the same motive. Wherever these men influence the public voice, nothing is to be heard but calumnies against Crawford. But our eyes have been opened by the A. B. Plot. Let the people know the truth, and they will do right. Jefferson, Madison, Macon, all of our Republican fathers, tell us Crawford is the proper man to be our next President.

This is an extraordinary age. We have seen a Robespierre surrounded by his minions, singing hosannas in his praise amidst the shrieks, the tears, and the groans of his murdered victims. We have seen a Benedict Arnold conquering nature in his march through the northern wilderness ; performing prodigies of valour in his winter campaign against Quebec, where the gallant Montgomery fell. The same

Arnold led back his troops, fighting every step for hundreds of miles, impeded in his progress by rivers, lakes, and enemies before and behind him; and again we see him foremost among the brave at the great battle of Saratoga, where Burgoyne was forced to surrender ten thousand British troops to the American arms. Yet after all this display of patriotism, this man, in the absence of General Washington, bargained the American Army to the British for a trifling sum of money. A providential discovery saved us; and the traitor fled to the enemy. An awful warning of the danger of trusting ambitious military men with power.

Fellow-Citizens: In the foregoing delineation of the character of General Jackson, I do not only speak my own sentiments and my own knowledge, but I express the opinions, the knowledge, and the feelings of hundreds, yes, thousands of the most intelligent and honest men of Tennessee. I speak those sentiments which would be seen through the columns of Tennessee newspapers, were it not that the most efficacious means have been adopted to subsidize some, and intimidate others, throughout the state. Such has been the spirit of domineering tyranny exercised by himself and his partisans, that it is apparent martyrdom for any man to act freely and independently on this subject.

But could the deliberate judgment of the reflecting part of his own state be fairly expressed; could the intelligent of his own vicinity be induced to answer impartially, fully, and freely, to the question, Shall Andrew Jackson be President of the United States? they would shudder at the thought, and with one voice declare he is unfit, by temper, talent, and disposition, for the exalted station. Should, however, the blind infatuation which misleads many honest men to support his cause, extend so far, and increase so

much, as to place him on the chair of state, we may look for wars, factions, broils and commotions; every thing will yield to ambition and violence; hosts of kinsmen and dependants will fill all lucrative offices, from the accomplished Quartermaster Stokely, down to his former race-riders; and it will be well for us, us, should we not, by the appearance of another Cæsar in the history of republics, require yet another Brutus to wind up the scene.

JESSE BENTON.

September, 1824.